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The Conference at The Hague To-day

To-day Count NELIDOFF, the head of Russia's delegation, will open the second Peace Conference in the name of the Czar. It was by him the formal invitations were issued, although the proposal for a second conference was originally made by the United States. There are two reasons for believing that our delegates will play a conspicuous part in the debates and may exercise a decisive influence on the conclusions reached. So far as most questions likely to be raised are concerned they will have behind them the representatives of nearly all the Latin American republics which were not present at The Hague in 1899 but have agreed to become parties to the convention adopted at that time. The influence of the United States will also be strengthened by the species of rivalry between Great Britain and France on the one hand and Germany on the other for American good will.

It is already plain, however, that there are narrow limits to what our delegates can accomplish. They can moot the question of the reduction of armaments. but a discussion of the subject can have no practical outcome in view of the refusal of Russia, Germany, Austria and Italy to take part in it. That the conference can be prevailed upon to accept the Drago Doctrine, which forbids the employment of force for the collection of contract debts, is also improbable. If the doctrine should be embodied in international law Great Britain would have no moral claim to continue her protectorate over Egypt, and the Hague tribunal. which recognized as preferred creditors the three Powers-Great Britain, Germany and Italy-which took part in the bombardment of Venezuela's seaports, would feel itself discredited. It should moreover be borne in mind that the Latin American States are not unanimous in advocating the sanction of the Drago Doctrine, one of the most powerful of them, Mexico, having declined to approve it. Under the circumstances we can look only for a perfunctory compliance on the part of our delegation with the resolution passed at the Pan-

There are two important things, nevertheless, which the second Peace Confer- thorized to investigate and make public ence can in all likelihood be induced to any and all infractions or suspected indo. It can take measures to widen the fractions of the law. His view, as rescope and increase the authority of the ported, is that it can inquire into secrets, permanent tribunal at The Hague, and examine books and expose evils. So tection of private property in war time, exposing the "evils" of corporations whether such property belongs to neutrals or to belligerents. To the latter the law creating this bureau, that it is reform in international law-the United | now perhaps impossible to know precisely States has long been committed, hav- the original intent. ing offered to sign the Declaration of Paris in 1856 if the other signatories would agree that private property pertaining to the subjects or citizens of a belligerent State should be as immune from capture at sea as on land. At that time Great Britain was opposed to the innovation, but she now has a strong under penalty of publication of all their motive for changing her position, as it has become to her a matter of vital concern that the transmission of her food supplies should be uninterrupted during war times. Germany also must strongly desire to see the extensive ocean trade which she has built up so laboriously guaranteed against seizure.

If only this one far reaching innovation can be made a principle of international law it will have been well worth while to have called together the second conference.

Copyright Agitation in France.

France is a fond, doting mother to her artistic children. Besides giving them a measure of intelligent appreciation and of social esteem which must be envied by their kind elsewhere, she is generous in protecting their property. Except Japan no country is more so. In the United States copyright now runs for twenty-eight years, with an extension of fourteen more under certain conditions. In France it runs unconditionally throughout the author's life and for fifty vears after his death.

But French authors are idealists. They have long been demanding copyright for a hundred years after death, or even in perpetuity. Now it seems that something of their demand may soon be granted. M. VICTOR MARGUERITTE, the president of the Société des Gens de Lettres, has been conferring with M. BRIAND, the Minister of Public Instruction, and he reports that the Minister of the State of New York when they intends to lay a sympathetic bill before Parliament.

To encourage M. BRIAND in this intention he is being plied with arguments which may not seem particularly impressive to the less favored followers of art in other countries. For instance, M. MARCEL PRÉVOST, who denounces the present system as "mere spoliation," calls the Minister's attention to the case of a writer of fifty who marries a girl of eighteen and dies next year. "His widow runs a risk of being robbed of her inheritance just when old age [sixtyeight] incapacitates her from earning a livelihood." If that remote risk is unjust, what must be said about the certain dangers overhanging the families of American men of letters? Indeed,

compared with the grounds of complaint existing elsewhere, some of the French grievances appear a trifle fantastic. To illustrate the "flagrant unfairness" of their system the copyright o' VICTOR Hugo is contrasted with that of Guy DE MAUPASSANT. Dying at eightythree Hugo enjoyed sixty-five years of property in his lifetime, or with the fifty after death, one hundred and fifteen years altogether. DE MAUPASSANT, dying at forty, had only fifteen years of living proprietorship and a total of sixty-five. "Moreover, DE MAUPASSANT had already been cheated by Providence n having a much shorter period of pro-

ward with a Socialist scheme by which

the individual's copyright would run out

as at present, but the State would receive

10 per cent. on all subsequent sales. Influ-

enced by these Socialistic demands, M.

MARGUERITTE abates his claims and is

content to propose that the heirs, after

the fifty years from death have expired.

should share the profits of the copyright

with the Société des Gens de Lettres,

or with any other such body to which

the author has belonged, the society's

share to be devoted to its pension fund.

"At all events the publishers would not

then receive the entire profits on works

which they reprint to the prejudice of

Even in this respect—the competition

of reprints-it is doubtful if the French

suffer as much as American or English

writers do. In fact, their agitation might

well be used to supply a set of a fortiori

arguments for the better protection of

Where the Bureau of Corporations

Properly Belongs.

The Hon, OSCAR STRAUS, the active and

conscientious Secretary of Commerce and

* The Bureau of Corporations has direct super

vision over the great enterprises of this country.

It can inquire into their secrets, examine their

books and expose the evils they practise. Its

There must be some mistake. The act

under which this bureau was created

gives it "power and authority to make.

under the direction and control of the

Secretary of Commerce and Labor, dili-

gent investigation," &c. Its right to

expose the "evils practised by the great

enterprises of this country" is subject

to a declaration in the law that the in-

formation obtained by it, "or as much

thereof as the President may direct,"

shall be made public. Its authority in

those directions, therefore, would seem

to be both limited and somewhat ques-

Mr. STRAUS is reported as using the

word "evils," a term which is open to

different construction by different minds.

He does not say that the bureau is au-

of a subordinate bureau with authority

morals and to compel the business men

of the community to carry on their busi-

business and business methods. Yet this

appears to be the construction of the

act by the Secretary. To an exposure

of evils there may be no objection, but

a power rests with neither the Commis-

sioner of Corporations nor the Secretary

of Commerce and Labor, nor again with

The foregoing interpretation of this

grant of power and authority supports

strongly the position taken by THE SUN

in earlier comments. It declares that

the work of the Bureau of Corporations

is in effect the work of a detective

agency, an inquisition. For precisely

that reason, as it appears to us, the

Bureau of Corporations should be taken

out of the Department of Commerce and

Labor, where it does not properly belong,

and transferred to the Department of

More Radical Than Oklahoma.

by a convention 90 per cent, of whose

members were Democrats, has been

hailed as a scandalously radical docu-

ment, and pressure has been brought to

bear upon the President to reject the

Constitution, if approved by popular

vote, because it failed to provide a re-

publican form of government. But in

dealing with railroad passenger tariffs

these berated constitution makers were

ernor Hughes has had the courage and

In the synopsis of the Oklahoma or-

ganic law which found its way into the

newspapers the bald fact was stated that

the new Constitution decreed a two cent

maximum railroad fare. All that had

been said in condemnation of the radical

document seemed to be justified if this

report were true. Why not leave the

fixing of railroad rates to the Legislature,

was the obvious question-for a Consti-

tution to establish any rate was unheard

of and arbitrary. But the Oklahomans

were not so black as they were painted.

After providing for a corporation com-

mission and enumerating its powers over

transportation and other incorporated

good s nse to veto.

The Oklahoma Constitution, drafted

Justice.

the President himself; but with the law.

tionable.

literary property in this country.

Labor, is quoted as saying:

living authors.'

It will be seen that the two cent rate duction." These spoiled children apparis to be tentative, power being lodged ently do not confine their grumbling to with the corporation commission, upon the law of man complaint or protest of any railroad M. VICTOR MARGUERITTE, whose ideas company affected, to make a new and it seems the Minister is likely to embody higher maximum rate. Indeed, the Conin his bill, starts from the principle that stitution in the clause "until otherwise literary property should be permanentprovided by law" may be said to refer the as permanent at least as any other form whole matter of passenger rates to the of property. But here the Socialist ten-Legislature, Governor Hughes in his dencies now prevailing in France inveto of the Baldwin bill pointed to what tervene rather oddly. M. MARGUERITTE he called the "better way." He said: recognizes that the present Parliament is hostile to rights of inheritance altogether Indeed, a deputy has already come for-

37 declared:

" Where a matter requires investigation in order that a just result may be reached, the obvious course is to create a body which can investigate with expert assistance as summarily as possible and which shall have adequate power to make appropriate orders. Such a body has been created in this State through the Public Service Commissions law, recently enacted."

"No person, company or corporation, received

or other agency, operating a railroad, other than a

first class transportation for each passenger, be

tween points within this State on the portions of

its road operated within this State, more than

two cents a mile until otherwise provided by law.

provided, however, the corporation commission

shall have the power to exempt any railroad from

the operation of this section upon satisfactory proof

that it cannot earn a just compensation for the

services rendered by it to the public if not per-

the transportation of passengers within the State."

mitted to charge more than two cents a mile for

Whether the "better way" is the best way remains to be seen, but the Oklahoma Constitution makers did not propose the worst way: their two cent a mile frenzy was tempered by a modicum of common sense. Perhaps if their passenger fare section had been read to the New York lawmakers our own radicals would have escaped the rebuke of the veto.

The March of Buttermilk Mountain.

On or about July 1 the topography of eastern Massachusetts will receive an important addition. Quietly, so quietly that not a preliminary escaped, arrangements have been made for a stupendous feat of engineering. Porter's Hill at Danvers, which "commands a varied landscape," is to relinquish its command for the summer months to a still greater eminence. Buttermilk Mountain, tall, precipitous and bald at the peak, is to pass temporarily from the Hoosier State to the Bay.

The winds of Indiana that for years have raged about its summit will dolefully whistle at its departure, but the ocean breezes of Massachusetts will hum around its cloud capped face with joy. The eagles will scream at the loss of their favorite aerie, but the eagles' loss will be the fishhawks' gain. The worthy citizens of Indianapolis, worshippers of the sublime and the awful in nature, will feel keenly the absence of their pet shrine, but the citizens of Danvers, equally worthy, will rejoice in the possession-temporary though it be-of something really high Porter's Hill? As the ant hill is to the sand dune, as the Ozarks are to the Andes, as the cranberry is to the cantaloup, so is Porter's Hill to Buttermilk Mountain! The fishermen of Gloucester will steer by it. The Marblehead yachtsmen, seeking a

from its topmost crag. On or about July 1 the Old Man of the Mountains, gazing across New England from New Hampshire to the sea, will sight his adopted son. Emissaries in the shape of sun kissed clouds will carry to the new peak the greetings of the old. But, despite the unparalleled importance it may propound a new rule for the pro- much has happened in the matter of of the event, all that comes out of Massachusetts under a Danvers date line is the following:

signal station, will fling the blue peter

since the approval in February, 1903, of " Vice-President FAIRBANKS will pass the three months following July 1 in the old Pedrick mansion on Locust street. The house is at the apex of Porter's Hill, and commands a varied landscape." It is, however, inconceivable that Congress ever intended to endow the chief

Incredible indifference-but there it is! Massachusetts should warm to a worthier to set up his own standard of commercial welcome of Ossa to Pelion.

Senator Page's Responsibility.

ness in conformity with that standard In blocking the passage of the night police court bill in the Senate Senator ALFRED R. PAGE takes upon himself a responsibility which most men would shun who have at heart the purification of the magisterial courts of this city who is to say what is an evil and what and the uprooting of the vile alliance of is not an evil? We assume that such police station grafters and professional bondsmen plunderers.

Does Senator Page wish to become known as the protector of the bondsmen? Is he willing that this abominable traffic over the earnings of fallen women shall continue in this town because of petty political differences in his party? If so he is not to be complimented on his perspicacity

The people will know where to place the responsibility of any failure to secure the night police court, much needed and unanimously desired-grafters and plunderers excepted.

A New York Jail.

This is a trustworthy description of a jail in which the describer once spent considerable time:

"The cells are so dark that it is impossible to view the inside of them without a lamp or candle. A great deal of the plumbing is out of order and ceds repairing: many of the locks of the cells are broken and cannot be used. A great majority of the inmates are court prisoners. One day 170 out of 202 men were of this class. As the keeper does not consider it safe to use any of the cells for the confinement of this class of prisoners, except the lower tiers of cells opening into the central corridor, this part of the prison is constantly filled almost to congestion. These prisoners are given exercise in more conservative than the legislators this corridor about four hours daily; but owing to the fact that the corridor is small and the prisoners passed the two cent fare bill, which Gov- are so numerous, the corridor is filled with a mob of men during this period.

The cells necessarily used for those men whose criminality has not yet been adjudged are absolute dungeons, not a ray of sunlight ever enters them, and even at midday the darkness is impenetrable without the use of an artificial light; and yet these men are compelled to occupy these cells twenty hours out of each twenty four. The whole antiquat ed structure is not only unsanitary, but is demoral izing to the inmates. it is a nursery of crime."

Thus graphically is brought before the reader's mind a picture of the unhappy conditions that once obtained in many public institutions. Fortunately, only the least progressive communities have failed

to improve them. Perhaps it is unnecessary to say that this pen picture of a jail is drawn by the secretary of the New York State Com-

companies, the Constitution in Section mission of Prisons, and that the sentences quoted above may be found on pages 165-166 of the twelfth annual report of that body, under the heading "Kings County Jail."

street railroad or electric railroad, in whole or in part, within this State, shall demand or receive for Most hunters of big game agree that the Asian elephant will long survive his African cousin. He is protected, while the African animal is still overhunted. His ivory is not so large, white and hard as that of the African elephant. The result is that the African branch of the family is slaughtered by thousands every year. On the other hand all the forests and jungles of India, Burma and Siam where wild elephants congregate are under the control of the Government, and laws for the conservation

of elephants are strictly enforced. It is only now and then when the pachyderms, multiplying in the jungle, develop a few "vagabonds" dangerous to the public that permission is given to hunt them for a while. But everywhere in Asia the tamed elephant is looked upon as a useful domestic animal, his numbers are recruited not only by breeding but also by reenforcements caught in the wilds, and his future seems assured. The Asian elephant is appreciated at his true value wherever his home may be, and there seems to be no more danger that he will be exterminated than that the dog will

meet this fate. The convention signed by the Powers in 1890 for the preservation of the African elephant and other wild animals will undoubtedly tend to prolong the life of the great beast, but unless more strenuous measures are taken he is certain to become extinct in time. Many laws have been framed to eke out his existence, but in large parts of tropical Africa the law is a dead letter. It is violated by white men, caravans and wild natives wherever an animal whose ivory is coveted may be killed, with small chance of detection, ten or fifteen miles away in the forests or jungle. It is a fact that there is no present safety or future guarantee for the African elephant.

Mr. JOHN KENNEDY, the Yale rowing coach has decided to give out the time of all the practice rows of his crews at New London, and his sportsmanlike course is regarded as "a challenge to the Harvard officials to throw off the mask also and give out the correct time after every spin." Why not, as the regatta is a friendly rivalry and not a "betting proposition," and the faculties of the two universities do not make "books" on the races? It ought to be astonishing that Mr. KENNEDY's action is looked upon as chivalrous and daring. The concealment of time made in practice trials was always a foolish business. Fast time in preparation for a race, whether of horses or men, is but a poor indication of what they will do in competition. The Yale crew of last year was wonderfully fast in rowing over the course, but in the actual race succumbed to Harvard, whose time in practice had been slow by comparison.

Naval and military preparations in Japan practically are complete. A large Japanese force is being gathered, and at present a Japanese corps is at Hawaii in the guise of workingmen. Not wishing to fly into the face of the worki's opinion. Japan must create a plausible pretext. Every incident, no matter how trifling, is seized upon for this purpose.—Captain RICEMOND P. HOBSON, late U. S. N.

Captain Hobson's information and opin ons as a private citizen are no great matter, but he will presently be in full voice on the floor of Congress as Representative from the Sixth Alabama district. He promises to be a rich find for the Progressive party in Japan, and no doubt he will be quoted more freely by the Opposition papers in Tokio than any other American statesman.

There are two American personalities to-day well known and talked about on every corner of the earth, and it is difficult to determine which is the more popular. They are THEODORN ROOSEVELT and the American girl. As I love and admire both, I dare not state my preference.—The Hon. JORN BARRETT, addressing the young ladies of the Quincy Mansion School at Wollaston, Mass.

This is not diplomacy, but gush,

Potato Lead Pencils.

From Daily Consular and Trade Reports. About two and a half years ago a small company was formed to perfect and exploit an invention which instead of making use of the expensive cedar wood substitutes a compact mass the main ingredient of which is potatoes. The invention has finally been perfected and the pencils are being manufactured in large quantities preparatory to being placed on the market. I [Consul Hannah of Magdeburgi have seen and used some of these pencils, which while slightly heavier are the same in size, form and appearance as those at present in use, admit of sharpening a little more easily and can be produced at a very nominal figure. A per-manent company was founded in March at Berlin acting under patents in fourteen countries.

The Gasolene Engineer.

When I grow up to be a man I know what I shall be: I'll be a gas'lene engineer-A strenuous life for me To see him in his overalls He knew enough to bear in mind

A quarter that he knows. Pon has the launch brought to the dock And thinks he's the kingpin He hollers loudly, "All aboard! And the guests they tumble it He strikes a chesty pose up from But that's as far as Pop can go-

It's up to the engineer. He ticks the carbureter And he emerys the switch; He fumbles with the wiring. Making sure that which is which. With the needle valve he fusses. On his knees he cranks and cusses. The spark coll softly buzzes-And she's off.

The guests they feel her going And they cry, "Oh, this is And Pop stands proudly at the wheel-And fouls a mooring line. With oars and boat hooks overboard The shaft is soon made clear, And then, when all is ready-It's up to the engineer.

He ticks the carbureter And he emerys the switch; He fumbles with the wiring. Making sure that which is which With the needle valve he fusses On his knees he cranks and cusses. The spark coll softly buzzes-And she's off. Pop heads her for the ocean,

Where every mainsail fills: The guests they feel the motion And grow white around the gills Pop swings the launch toward the shore Because the guests feel queer. The engine says chug-chug, chug-pop-It's up to the engineer. He ticks the carbureter And he emerys the switch; He fumbles with the wiring.

Making sure that which is which. With the needle valve he fusses.

On his knees he cranks and cusses

The spark coll softly buzzes-

And she's off. Pop points her for the landing. And she's running like a clock; He skips the various mooring lines And whistles for the dock. He shouts the order, "Slow her down! And almost at the pier The engine says chug-chug, pop-bang-

It's up to the engineer. He ticks the carbureter And he emerys the switch He monkeys with the wiring To be sure that which is which. He cranks and sweats and cusses, And the coil correctly buzzes-But he poles her in.

BERNIER'S REMARKABLE JOUR-

Captain Bernier did wonderful things in the Arctic last summer if the truth is told about his achievements. He left Canada on the little steamer Arctic, formerly the Gauss of the German Antarctic expedition. to raise the flag over as many islands to the north of our continent as circumstances would permit. According to the story he has bagged most of the archipelago for Canada. The most eastern islands had been

flagged a year or two earlier.

In August last he steamed across Baffin's Bay into Lancaster Sound, the wide channel leading far west through the Parry Archipelago. He stopped at Port Leopold on North Somerset Island long enough to add 5,718 pounds of provisions to the depot which Amundsen had deposited there. He then went on westward, adding to the Dominion great slices of the earth's surface every day. He landed on Griffith, Cornwallis, Bathurst, Byam Martin, Melville, Prince Patrick, Eglinton and Emerald Islands, solemnly hoisted the flag and made them all soundly Canadian.

On his way back he stopped at Erebus Bay, North Devon Island, which had been inducted into the Dominion the year before, and repaired the monument erected there to the memory of Sir John Franklin. He was back in Baffin's Bay in less than six weeks from the time he entered Lancaster Sound, and he spent last winter there in Pond's Inlet, with the intention this summer of steaming north to the northwest coast of Greenland. Does he expect to raise his potent flag over Cape Morris Jesup, the most northern land now known, and all the rest of Peary's discoveries in that region?

out a word as to its significance. THE SUN casts no discredit on the report when it says that it involves the most remarkable feat in the annals of Arctic navigation. Not long ago the world rang with the news that Amundsen had made the northwest passage. If Bernier's report is strictly accurate, and we have no reason to doubt it. it means that in the summer of 1906 he practically made the northwest passage twice He entered the archipelago at its eastern side and he raised his flag on Prince Patrick Island, which stands on its western edge. He accomplished twice in one season what many ships in the long years of the Franklin search tried in vain to do. Fiftyfour years ago McClure made the northwest passage in the same waters, but it was only by abandoning his ship, the Investigator, in the ice, and sledging eastward to another ship.

Parry in 1819 made nearly the same trip that Bernier is said to have made last summer, excepting that he did not come back till the following year. He was the first to see the splendid waterways leading westward from Lancaster Sound, and he followed them, as Bernier did last summer, to Merville Island, but there he was frozen in for the winter. His achievement has stood ever since as the most successful feat of navigation in those waters; but Bernier has made the same journey and gone on beyond to Prince Patrick Island and come back again in the same season.

It is something undreamed of, and would scarcely be credited if it were not for the remarkable report of the ice conditions late last summer along the west coasts of the Parry Archipelago. This report came to the American Geographical Society in a letter from Mr. Stefansson, the ethnologist of the Mikkelsen expedition, taken overland to Dawson last winter. He wrote that the west coast of Banks Land, which with Prince Patrick Island is on the western edge of the Parry Archipelago, was free from ice as far as the whalers went. The whaler Norwhal, leaving Herschel Island on September 7 last year, went up the west coast of Banks Land, then west to 180 miles north of Herschel Island, and finally south. without seeing a cake of ice.

Hundreds of miles further north the waves lapped the sides of Pearv's Roosevelt in midwinter. The ice conditions in 1906 were certainly very unusual in many parts of the Arctic good, however, for if they were unfavorable to Peary's sledging they helped Ber-

nier's ship on her round trip. THE SOUTH ON BRYAN. Statesman of the Cleveland or Tilden

Order Preferred.

From the Memphia Commercial Appeal. We yield to none in admiration of Mr. Bryan as an orator and a statesman; but the consensus of opinion among the dispassionate is that he can never be elected. Undoubtedly Mr. Bryan has a craze in his favor. The same spirit that prevailed in the Middle Ages during the "Dancing Mania" seems to be abroad in the twentieth century. The Democratic hysteria attaches itself to Bryan just as the Republican hysteria attaches itself to Roosevelt.

But do the people want either? Why not get back to the simple life? This country is badly in need of a statesman of the Cleveland or Tilden order. We need a statesman, not simply a man who will start something, whether there is anything to be started or not. Mr. Bryan is always a doubtful propo-Not that he is not personally a man of exalted character and one who is thoroughly honest, but he is too evanescent shifting. It does not seem probable that a elect him President; and so under the circumstances he ought to drop out and give the other fellows a clear field.

No Hope in Bryan's Leadership. From the Richmond News-Leader.

While instinctively loyal to leaders and cause, and ready always to obey that noble instinct regardless of results to themselves. the people of the South are practical. They look at facts. They are ready to acknowl edge frankly that Mr. Bryan has been a disappointment to them. He has undertaken to thrust himself into continued leadership of the Democratic party as none of their own most revered leaders ever did. After Gettysburg General Lee offered to resign Bryan has led us to two Gettysburgs and has not offered to resign. He continues to demand the position of commander-in-chief and to thrust saide with aggressive derision or re buke all who have been suggested to succeed him. He has given us no platform, has suggested no definite purposes which command our approval or enlist our interest. There nothink satisfying, enlightening or ductive of enthusiasm in vague talk of Government ownership of railways and theoretical disquisitions on the initiative and referendum. Therefore the people of the South feel that under his leadership would be hopeless.

Information for Mr. Bryan From Alabama From the Mobile Register.

man as candidate for President, but thinks men of a certain kind should be considered-Hoke Smith of Georgia or Governor Campbell of Texas, for example. He regards Senator Daniel as a reactionary; that is to say, a mossback and too conservative fo practical uses at the present time. We would like to tell Mr. Bryan that Senator Daniel. reactionary, mossback and conservative, is much more nearly representative of the best intelligence and the best interests of the South than the harum scarum Hoke Smith, whom he commends so highly. If we are to have radical as a candidate we prefer Mr. Bryan himself, for we can take the measure of his radicalism and will know what to expect of him. Moreover we have thorough respect for his sincerity and honests, if not for all of his opinions. We cannot say as much for his Georgia man.

EMPLOYERS LIABILITY.

Support for the President's Plan of Com pensation for injuries to Workmen.

TO THE EDITOR OF THE SUN-Sir: Refer ring to President Roosevelt's proposal that workmen should receive a certain, definite and limited compensation for all accidents in industry irrespective of negligence," and the public comments upon the same in various daily papers, I desire to call your attention to some considerations showing the proposal to be eminently wise, conservative and humane, and little more than an enactment of a statute in force in England for more than ten

years past. The law on this subject as heretofore and now administered is, to those gifted with a conscience and who know, simply monstrous. According to the popular conception, any ort of an accident case is a mine of wealth to the plaintiff and his attorneys. In reality n four out of five accident cases the plaintiff is as absolutely remedyless, so far as his legal" rights are concerned, as if he lived in state of barbarism.

The popular notion of the value of an "accident" as an asset results from the widespread publicity given to the rendering of a large verdict in fator of a plaintiff when some rare

hance of that sort occurs. To a lawyer such a verdict means next to nothing, because in the great majority of of all judicial tribunals to give great considration to so-called "property" rights, as distinguished from "personal" rights, such vercts are almost invariably upact on appeal or by the trial Justice. The real theory possibly unconscious, is that before a poor and ignorant man, however greatly injured, should receive such an amount from the pockets of one who is supposed to have had no consideration for it, such a person ought to have at least two or three "runs for his money." Long before the plaintiff can obtain a final judgment in his favor he is willing to

It is a little strange that the geographical settle for a triffing sum, and usually does so. This disposition of the court is particularly periodicals are publishing this news withnoticeable in cases involving master and ser- | Ireland, to the republics to England, to republic accidents to persons sustaining other relathere is almost invariably extreme poverty and destitution on the plaintiff's side, with wealth and position on the defendant's. other classes of accident cases no such inequality generally exists. The consequent

other classes of accident cases no such inequality generally exists. The consequent pitiable suffering in cases of injury to employees has attracted attention in recent years to the gross injustice that now prevails in respect to their obtaining legal relief, and has caused desire for a change.

At the present time, speaking of the law of New York, even with the existing Labor law (Laws of 1897, chapter 419) and the Employers' Liability act of 1902, great improvements as they were upon the previously existing condition, the law still is that even the slightest neglect on the part of the injured employee, resulting in death or lifelong injury to himself, absolutely debars such employee and his family from any relief whatsoeyer, even though the employer may have been guilty of gross neglect of proper precautions and gross violation of express statutes designed for the protection of employees. The rule further is that if the employee's conduct does not come up to that of the "ideal man of ordinary prudence" such employee is guilty of contributory negligence, even though he was doing his best at the time of the accident.

The above is not an exaggerated statement.

Such is the law as administered to deep in this

a nary prudence" such employee is guilty of contributory negligence, even though he was doing his best at the time of the accident.

The above is not an exaggerated statement. Such is the law as administered to-day in this State, deemed to be one of the most enlightened in the world. (See Knislev vs. Pratt. 148 N. Y. 372; Kiernan vs. Eidlitz. 115 A. D. 141, for late cases illustrating law as stated.)

Is not such a condition absolutely revolting to any intelligent person whose brain and conscience are in a normal state? Is it not perfectly obvious that the only fair disposition of a case where both employee and employer are at fault would be at least to require the employer to avone-half the recuniary damages instead of as now requiring the party damages instead of as now requiring the party least able to endure the whole loss to stand it? (This is the familiar rule in admiralty law.)

In this letter I am, of course, speaking only of the civil rights of Injured persons and passing over the matter of the practical denial of justice in nearly all accident cases in the city of New York at the present time by reason of the fact that the mere internosition of an answer by the defendant prevents the case from coming to trial for unward of two years. During this time the maimed employee and his helpless family must live by charity, and when finally his case comes to trial he is usually defeated because of death or disapperance of his witnesses.

The doctrine known as assumption of risk is that it is presumed that an employee bargains for and obtains money wages adequate to compensate him for the ordinary risks of husiness, including risks resulting from his own negligence and negligence of practically all his fellow servants. This is the theory. In practice it is a matter of commens knowledge that, outside of employments requiring high skill, the compensation fixed bears practically no relation to such dangers, and, as the President well says, it is simply outragened. The compensation fixed bears practically no relati

who belong to the class least able to do this. Now then, what is the proposition of the President? It is simply to enact in the United States a statute which has existed in England for more than ten years, entirely familiar to lawyers, known as "The Workingman's Compensation Act of 1897." which act provides a simple, speedy and determinate compensation for all employees in those occupations known by experience to be especially dengerous, such as work in connection with railroads, mines, outsries, erection of buildings, factories, and more recently (1900) agriculture. (See Dresser's "Employers' Liability," page 480.)

Professional representatives of employers

of labor and of the various casualty compa-nies in commenting upon the President's speech have been ready with the suggestion that the change of law in the respect indicated may result in injustice to employers at times. Undoubtedly this may be so; but how about the scandalous and wicked injustice to the poor and helpless that is now almost universal

poor and helpless that is now almost universal in respect to this matter?

The remedy proposed would accomplish three things: 1. Place the employee and employee on an equal plane so that both would share the burden of the injury from the accident. 2. Make it unnecessary for the employee to batter one-third or one-half the compensation to which he is legitimately entitled to some attorney to assist him in effecting a collection. 3. Bring about a situation whereby the employer could as a situation whereby the employer could as a situation whereby the employer could suggest that the significant is the complete to contribute to individuals injured as a legitimate expense of the business in which such employer is engaged.

of the dishless in which such employer is engaged.

This change in the law must and soon will come in some shape, as the bresent situation of the employee is nothing short of intolerable in a society professing to be civilized.

The President, in my judgment, is right in saving that the responsibility for the financial loss from an accident should first be imposed upon the employers. Ultimately, of course, the whole community must pay for it.

New York, June 14. Gilbert D. Lamb.

TO THE EDITOR OF THE SUN-Sir: Will you rant me sufficient space to acknowledge the grace il and courteous criticism made by Mr. Isidor Rosenfeld concerning my "whistling oyster" In Mr. Rosenfeld's remarks the epithets and "nature faker" are applied to me, and I am wondering whether he spontaneously selected these choice and complimentary terms from his own vocabulary or whether he is servilely imitating the phrascology of a more illustrious personage. I confess that the signature was disappointing. NEW YORK, June 14.

TO THE EDITOR OF THE SUN-Sir: It is cer tainly amazing to see how many damned liars there are, since the controversy as to the habits of will animals was started by you or through your cor-respondents. I had entirely different opinions of your readers and correspondents. This morn ing's issue contains a story about a lobster dore" by name, which is certainly not to be be-lieved; and as to Mr. Henry Edward Warner, why, he is it-Münchhausen or Mulhatton would be better name for him, or Ananias would suit be NEW YORE, June 14. ISIDOR ROSENFELD.

Sensitive Firemen.

From the London Evening Standard.
The Witham (Essex) fire brigade applied to the Urban Council to be supplied with new uniform to take the place of the white calleo overalls, locally known as "white ducks," which they have had to wear for some time past when attending free. They complained that to appear in such an outf with a brass helmet, had made them the subject of public ridicule, and they asked for £40 to be expended in providing them with proper firemen's

The Council refused, on the ground that they could not incur such an expenditure in order make their fire brigade "fit to go into a and the firemen have rejoined by handing in their resignations.

Elephants at Western Fort. rom the Kansas City Journal

The War Department has selected the Fort Si reservation as a manuscring ground. As a means of moving heavy artillery from Lawton to the reservation a carload of elephants has been unloaded. These are the first elephants ever brought to Oklahoma or the West for such a purpose.

THE "CENTURY'S" HUGO LETTER.

A Parallel That Ought to Be Interesting to the Countess Rozwadowska. TO THE EDITOR OF THE SUN-Sir: The

leading article in the June issue of the Century Magazine is devoted to a letter by Victor Hugo on "Les Misérables," with this comment by

the editor: The letter of Victor Hugo which follows is from a manuscript version in Italian, probably the translation by Victor Hugo's secretary, and was written in response to an inquiry from Count Victor A. Pepe of Italy as to Hugo's purposes in writing his great romance. The letter, which is signed in the writer's autograph, has been furnished to the Century by the Countess Rozwadowska, daughter of the gen-tleman to whom it was addressed. We have not been able to find it in the correspondence of Hugo, and it is believed to be unpublished. In any event it will be read with special interest in view of its relations to current social problems, though general conditions in Italy have become more favorable since it was written.

T. Y. Crowell & Co.'s edition of "Les Misée rables," which was published in 1887 and has been circulated widely in this country ever since, contains a translated letter as an appendix which ought to interest the Century. This letter in the Crowell & Co. edition, singu larly enough, was written by Hugo on the very same date that the Pepe letter was written-October 18, 1862-but it dressed to "M. Daelli, publisher of the Italian translation of 'Les Misérables' in Milan, Here are the opening paragraphs of the letters in parallel columns: Count Pope's in the Cen | Daelli's in Crowell edi

tury. You are right, sir, You are right, sir, when you say that "Les when you tell me that Misérables" is written "Les Misérables" is writfor all peoples. I do not ten for all nations. know whether all will not know whether it will read its but assuredly I be read by all, but I composed it for all. It is wrote it for all. It is adaddressed to England as dressed to England as well as to Spain, to Italy well as to Spain, to Italy as well as to France, to as well as to France, Germany equally with to Germany as well as that have slaves as much which have slaves as to the empires that well as to empires which have seris. Social proh | have seris. Social prob lems cross the frontiers: lems overstep frontiers.
the sores of the human The sores of the human race -vast sores that race, those great sore cover the globe-do not which cover the globe halt at the blue or red do not halt at the red lines traced on the atlas. and blue lines traced Wherever man is igno upon the map. In every Wherever man is igno-rant and in despair, place where man is igwherever woman sells norant and despairing in herself for bread, where every place where wom lack of a book to teach | wherever the child su him and of a hearth to fers for lack of the boo warm him, the book of which should instruct
"Les Misérables" knocks him and of the hearth

at the door, saying: which should warm him.
"Open, I am here for the book of "Les Mise. door and says: "Open to me, I come for you" The similarity between the Century's supposedly unpublished letter and the one that has been on file in many public and private libraries at least twenty years continues al

This, sir, is what your

Count Pepe's. There you have, sir, what your letter has impelled me to say to you: I say it for you and for and I say it for you and your country. If I have for your country. If I insisted so strongly, it is have been so emphatic, because of one phrase in it is because of a phrase your letter. You write are Italians who say: say

in your writing, in which | "There are Italians, and 'This book of "Les Mis"- Mis rables" is a French rables" is French and book. It does not con-does not concern us. Let cern us. Let the French the French read it as a read it as a history; we history, but let us, on the contrary, read it as a romance."

Perhaps the Countess Rozwadowska will tell us whether Daelli was only Count Pepe's trade name. NEW YORK, June 14.

THE STEEL PROBLEM.

Transparent Anti-Corrosive Paint for Pro tection From the Atmosphere. TO THE EDITOR OF THE SUN-Sir: Tha many railroad wrecks in this country have

been due to defective rails has become more evident with the investigations which have been made in regard to the process of steel acy in the manufacture of steel in the United States, jeopardizing the lives of hundreds of thousands of people every year, is the direct between Mr. E. H. Harriman and Mr. Garr of the sicel trust It may be of interest to the general public to know wherein the main defects in structural steel lie. It is the practice of the manufacturers of

structural steel to give steel girders, beam and other material a first coat of iron or red lead oil paint. The material employed is usually of an inferior grade, in order to mee the prices of competition. The steel is per mitted to remain in exposed places for definite periods, where it is subject to damp ness, and in the case of steel coming from certain mills in the Pittsburg district, to the additional danger of a combination of ferri oxide with sulphurous fumes and carbon acid existing in the atmosphere. These results are shown in the form of rust spreads rapidly and which eventually ears

holes in the metal. To conceal these atmospheric attacks the iron or steel is covered with a rust colore oxide, and often these patches are covered with putty, the color of the pigments pre venting detection. It was this process which ships were put together in part with putty

It is well known that rust when well es tablished on structural work is composed approximately of fifty parts of ferric exide twenty-five parts of exygen and possible twenty-five parts of water. As the correspin is well established the covering of this is well established the covering of this material with red lead or similar coatings conceals the deadly work that is going a obsereatly, which may proceed, even if not stimilated by electrolytic action, at such a rapid the beams are employed and eventually cause a great catastrophe.

the beams are employed and eventually cause a great catastrophe.

A great expert. Von Tetmayr, recommends the painting of structural metal with a coaling of some transparent anti-corresive composition previous to delivery, fisuring the possibility of proper inspection as to work manship, so that it can be easily examined and any rusty or defective places he cleaned and made good before the final coating or covering of paint is but on. It is absolutely impossible, as stated, when iron is covered with oxide or other opaque substances to with oxide or other opaque substance detect this; that such transparent cover will withstand external influences has shown by several examples. own by several examples in oad bridges. NEW YORK, June 14.

Juryman's Tardiness Explained.

From the Boston Record.
A colored man was sitting in one of the Superior Court juries on a civil case last week. The case began at the morning session, but when the afternoon session began, though the Judge and eleven jurymen were in their places, there was no sign : the colored man. Court officers hurried up stairs and down stairs looking for the absentee, and even tried shops in the neighborhood of the court house. but to no avail. Finally when the Judge, tired of waiting, was just about to order a new jury selected in comes the colored man all out of breath. with his tacket on his arm and mopping huge drops of sweat from his brow. "'Scuse me, yo' Honor be called out to the Judge, "I'se sorry to keep yo' all waiting, but I jest runned off home for look at dat ill' honey child was born at mah house dis morning."

Honolulu Presentation Spech

From the Pacific Commercial Adjusting. Col. Johnson was presented with a beautiful set vice sword in a solid silver scabbard. resented by Lieut. A. W. Neely on britalf of 'ol. Johnson's old company, Lieut. Neely spraking as follows:

"Col. Johnson, you have never been a particulat

friend of mine, but the other members of Com; have requested me to say a few good thing you, but the good things I know about you are not military and will be omitted on this occasion. "I will say, on behalf of the company, that rou

have always treated every member in a fall, he orable and military manner, and when error carelessness crept in on the drill ground you be reated them in a strenuous manner, as far as tae English language would permit."